

EDWIN VANGORDER: ARTIST

# Trope and Entropy

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## Trope and Rhetoric As Palimpsest Towards Contemporary ART

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Antinomies posit simulcrae. Accordingly rhetoric finds paradox where positions outside of semiotics search fallacy. The two use indices differently, the first by displacing strict temporality to embedding of approaches and embodied form as the torus or self- mapping of the uneasy difference between configuration and representation. The latter or ontological realization is uneasy to accept objective and subjective transposal as oscillation only and would state more towards a flux that has moment. It is my concern to elaborate the constructive difference between these approaches without losing the momentum of rhetoric- pathos, ethos, logos or more available expression, context and discourse. Rhetorics are the manifold meaning of creative approach outside of grammar, thus trope in the dual role of program, of innovation “expect the unexpected” in which variety of approach, identity, time, narrative level, create the sense of scale the prefixes any sense of entropy to come.

## Trope and Entropy: Dialectic, Rhetoric and Overwriting as a Palimpsest Towards Contemporary Art

*Abstract:* I identify in this article a tension between art ontology and the poetics of visual rhetoric. This means that the conditions of experience which ontology is at pains to cognize and represent to usage or virtuality in so doing meets elements of the rhetorics. The latter in the moods and modes, temporal embedding and in the embodiment of form to configuration are, taken all together in a state that may be elusive enough as to be intersubjective but for all that retain the echoes, within the art work, of the necessity that was recognized into shifting dimensions of creative approach wherein dimension conceals as it reveals.

The Buckminster Fuller neologism “dymaxion” as a configuration of the words dynamic, maximum and tension is directed at a visionary new world. Robert Smithson and Mel Bochner in critiquing The Museum of Natural History( Flam, 1966. pp.26-38) similarly take a look at a vision of the New World posing of contingency and disorders in the model of a cultural labyrinth - institution, which essentially is that of colonialism. In a separate article (Flam, p 24) Smithson gives a rationale for Donald Judd which is sympathetic to his own art: stating that there is no room for the subconscious in Judd’s art... the corollary being then that the Museum of Natural History is a kind “room” for the subconscious... as Freud is quoted by Bal (2001, p. 37) “The subconscious is like a man not master of his house”...

A kind of psychological space for diverse levels of cognitive approach favoring configuration over representation in the sense of a kind of dimension building is indeed the domain of rhetoric and visual rhetoric. Dismissive as he may seem his trademark term “entropy” is his own setting into “contingency” of an artistic avenue of trope in its dual meanings of “program” and “innovation”. The prescient critique of science given by Bochner and Smithson see the program of the Museum of Natural

History as a true oddity in the sense of being a museum of a museum, an encapsulating of a point of view, a time capsule in fact.

John McHale who worked with Buckminster Fuller updated the time line by giving a statistical analysis ( McHale- Scalometer.wikispaces) of virtually every aspect of the world of that time. The statistical view of consumption becomes in its way an ironically painful echo...

I believe that Smithson actually worked in the tradition of classical rhetoric and adapted it. A building block for him in relation to the highly rhetorical field of psychology begins perhaps with his interest in Ad Reinhardt's famous engraving of Portend of the Artist as a Yhung Mandala , and Smithson, commenting on the engraving in his A Museum of Language in the Vicinity of Art (Flam, 1966 p.89) introduces the section with two quotes : The Art World was created in 4 days in 4 sections 40 years ago and originally in 404 BC. Today minor artists have 400 disciples and more favored mediocre artists have 44,000 Devotees approximately."( this is placed in the engraving which is a mandala like configuration of the art world in relation to the broad culture mapped to zones of interaction and meaning.

Smithson contrasts this with a quote of Edwin H. Colbert: " The immensity of geologic time is so great that it is difficult for the human mind to grasp readily of the reality of its extent. It is almost as if one were to try to understand infinity."

This contrast of scale between human and geological and human culture is the domain that requires art imagination to speak or experience... levels of cognition, understanding, in short the rhetoric of "pathos, ethos, dialectic" towards building dimension in discourse, recovering intuition in its objects- an appeal to the imagination through sympathetic cords of understanding to both generalize and specify towards meaning must begin with a kind of nexus, a sense of core reality, and the stratifications other geological processes Smithson uses as rhetoric for example can be seen borrowed by Ursula Von Rydngsvaard in her use of fused plywood blocks she cuts into. Yet in the process of working the

mathematical point, the focus on entity experiences dimensions that create a mirroring, and in his enantiomorphic mirrors Smithson essentially show configuration and representation as the imperfect mirrors, for which actual mirrors become metaphor. The evolution of this idea can be seen linguistically in the rhetorical “chiasme”, cross indexing, as in say the Heraclitus statement “the word is their witness – absent while present” As Phillips notes, ( course website 2008) Lacan translated this kind of “cancelling” into his mathemes for example inverting the Lesseurian modality of signified/subconscious to Subconscious/signifier, in other word the first case indicating the sub consciousness given form, and in the second giving form,: in the enantiomorphic mirror of mathematics, they “cancel”, one is back at the beginning...

Critique this as “semiotics” which in effect, arriving through the cancellation process that can be attributed to all the Kantian “antinomies” leaves one look for how art poses meaning. My reflection is that art does not pose meaning in the sense of representing but configures it outside of indices pertaining to pragmatics. The mirror ( of representation/configuration) is necessarily imperfect, recalling intuition rather than solving it. The difficult assignation of representation and configuration through his personality is the Matisse solution that Cronan notes. ( Essentially Matisse simply edits everything out that is not original to his sensibility while he uses a kind of program- thus the double edged “trope” evading “entropy”).

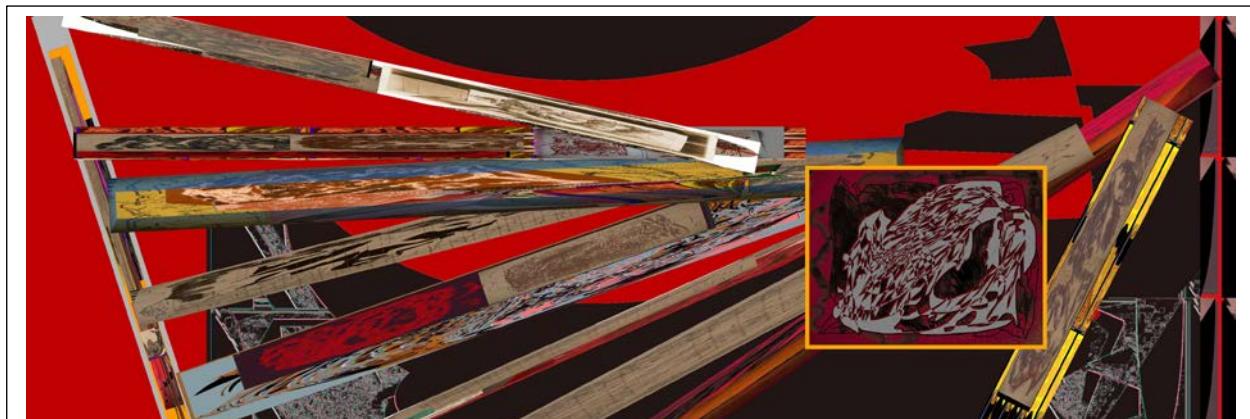
Cronan recalls that Duchamp felt the artist wrestled with the work and then gave it over to the viewer. That the viewer should “complete” the word seems to Cronan overly subjective, but in rhetorical terms complete may not mean finish to a point of view but rather to engage fully and in one tradition “embed”.(Bal, Deleuze, Baroque studies..)- Smithson describes his own conversation with Duchamp he told Duchamp;” You are an Alchemist”... Duchamp...” yes”. ( Flam p. 312)The fact that the answer is humorous shows that perhaps Smithson had no idea what to make of it...an alchemy in progress... a

specific instance however of his(Smithson's ) interest in psychology as a rhetoric is the in the conversations with Dennis Wheeler in which he goes into “dedifferentiation” (Flam p.207)as interpersonal immersion, intersubjectivity in turn suggests that artist to artist identifications are something he balances with a sense geological time. There is then, in the two quotes he uses the awe of the art world, and awe of the natural world which taken into their natural extension into time and space are imperfect mirrors where the human now all ego, now absolutely non balance each other.

The pun on the word “collection” is structured into the contrast between the collective subconscious as Ad Rheinhardt engraves it and Smithson reliquary like assimilations of geological stoneware.

In the following works I am interested in the psychological colloids of a visual rhetoric that can displace alchemy... or rather, alchemies own alchemy, an alchemist's alchemist...

The first cyber drawing takes the general form of a hyperbolic parabola and creates it out of forms that have been “compressed to create what becomes a species of lean-to in the cyber scroll or sleeve of drawing which in that dimension has different characteristics yet retains echoes of our physiological reflex arcs and cortical integrations within a then neurological semiotic model of media.( Eugini , 2011).



*Hyperbolic Parabolic : cyber drawing variable dimensions*

The second drawing is, in the spirit of Smithson, dedicated to the idea of tectonic plates, however the idea has, again, been removed from Geology into the cyber sleeve of virtuality.



In summary: for me the interest in building art dimension, dimensioning experience, is the resource that goes beyond the perplexities of the antinomies that build around duality. The dialogue of subjective and objective, sense and sensibility find in the classical rhetorics of semiotics, ontology , epistemology, cryptology ,semantics, narratology, psychology and deconstruction the thrownness, slippage and exit from transference that permits through word play dimensions of the subconscious which translate into other media, other “sites”, Smithson observes:” all language becomes a language of sites”. One would almost expect him to say breaks down into, but he separates from lying and in a sense, Lycee... through his methods. My modes are explicitly different : a total identification to drawing through which motion is identified to thinking, the morphology behind topology behind topography.

The following drawings play with complex mirroring through complex software layering's which wind the formative sleeve or circuit into almost chemical transformations at their overlaps; just as Duchamp's statement “yes” to the response that he was an alchemist leaves the listener to “make something of his rejoinder.... In particular I use forms that mirror on to their like, as though a sculpture exhibition of mirror plated forms that mirror the surrounding pieces, a kind of implicit cross section, which in cyber terms is like text mapping, i.e. placing text into a piece which in its distortions and windings show the







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